



Angelica Paez, *Veronica Lake Surfing*, 2013, collage with magazine cutouts, 8 x 9 1/4 in., Loan Courtesy of the Artist
Cover: Marilyn Lanfear, *Faces*, 2011, mixed media, 30 1/2 x 38 x 20 1/2 in., Loan Courtesy of the Artist

This exhibition is generously supported, in part, by the Edaren Foundation, the Texas Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, the City of Beaumont, the Wesley W. Washburn, M.D. and Lulu L. Smith, M.D. Endowment Fund, and the C. Homer and Edith Fuller Chambers Charitable Foundation.

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THE ART OF FOUND OBJECTS ENIGMA VARIATIONS



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The Art of Found Objects: Enigma Variations takes its title from my recent book, *The Art of Found Objects: Interviews with Texas Artists* (Texas A&M University Press, 2016). With that book (my first!) I hoped to honor Texas' strong tradition of artists who work with found materials, from the collages of Dorothy Hood to the revolutionary combines of Port Arthur's own, Robert Rauschenberg. While the artists in this exhibition range well beyond Southeast Texas—from Fort Worth, Dallas, Austin, Nacogdoches, San Antonio, and Lytle to Lake Bistineau and Boulder—the majority live or lived in Southeast Texas, especially Houston, Beaumont and Bay City.

For this exhibition, I chose to feature five artists (with multiple works on view) from five different locales. Steve Brudniak in Austin is likely the best-known statewide. His seamless sculptures are largely composed of found materials and often incorporate a subtle optical, or not-so-subtle tactile, component. Brudniak is joined by Marilyn Lanfear of San Antonio, who is featured in *Marilyn Lanfear: Material Memory* at the San Antonio Museum of Art, which closes as this exhibition is about to open; together the two shows amount to a small retrospective. Marilyn tells stories, often of her family, through her art. Angelica Paez, a Houston collage artist, is perhaps the least known of all artists in this exhibition. Though internationally published in collage anthologies, this is her first museum exhibition. Ward Sanders, like Joseph Cornell, makes poetic glass-fronted boxes through which he, like Marilyn, often tells stories. Ward lives in Lytle but his work is better known in Houston, where he has exhibited at Hooks-Epstein Galleries and the Holocaust Museum. Kelly Sears, though teaching in Boulder and maintaining her home and studio in Denver, Colorado, has strong regional



Ward Sanders, *Little Museum for Emerging Marrow*, 2015, mixed media, 14 x 15 x 12 in., Loan Courtesy of the Artist

ties. She was a Core Fellow at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston's Glassell School, after which she completed a Galveston Artist Residency. Included in this exhibition are three animated films, which all allude to her Texas experience.

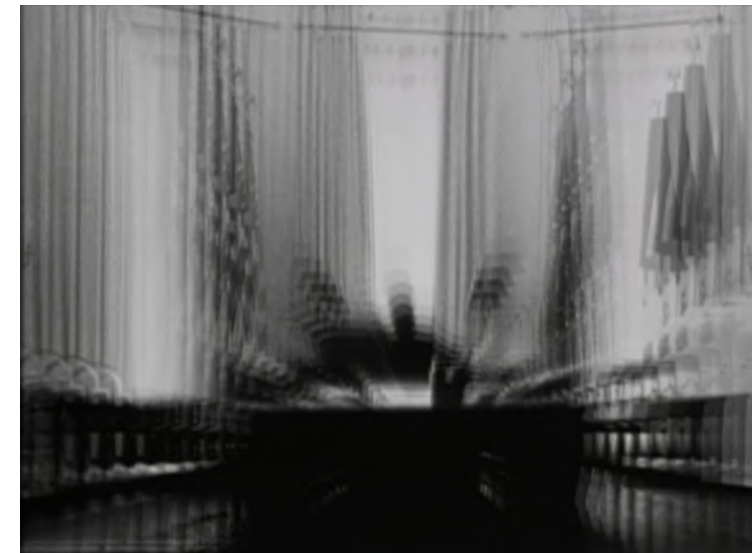
Thirteen other outstanding artists are represented by a single work each. In roughly chronological order they are: Charles Dellschau, Forrest Bess, Clyde Connell, Maudee Carron, Felix "Fox" Harris, David McManaway, Bert Long, Jesse Lott, Vernon

Fisher, Mary McCleary, Jonathan Rosenstein, Trenton Doyle Hancock, and Dario Robleto. The first seven are deceased, and in Dellschau's case since 1923. The final seven I was honored to interview for my book. Seven plus seven equals thirteen. Go figure.

If this exhibition's subtitle evokes a masterful, musical invention, it is no accident. As Edward Elgar's *Enigma Variations* pays musical tribute to his wife, beloved friends (and a dog), usually identified only by initials, so I highlight a selection of artists I greatly admire. The work of each is enigmatic and magical. Elgar's suite is sometimes said to contain a hidden theme. It might be fruitful to look at this exhibition as if it too contained a hidden theme. I hope viewers will linger; these works do not reveal themselves immediately.

I am grateful to the Art Museum of Southeast Texas in Beaumont for this opportunity. I thank the artists for their vision and the exhibition lenders and underwriters for their generosity. I dedicate this exhibition to my beloved S.T.F.

Robert Craig Bunch, Guest Curator and Author



Kelly Sears, *The Rancher* (still), 2013, 7 min. 9 sec. film, 14 x 15 x 12 in., Loan Courtesy of the Artist



Steve Brudniak, *That Which is Within You (Gnosis Stela)*, 2014, assemblage, 28 x 10 x 4 in., Collection of Jess Beal and Kimberly Vogelsang, Austin, Texas

On View December 8, 2018 - March 3, 2019

Taste of the Arts Lecture Series

12:30 p.m., Monday, February 11, 2019

Talk and Lunch with Dennis Kiel,
Director of the Dishman Art Museum, Lamar University.

Family Arts Day

10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Saturday, February 16, 2019